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HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

ONE HUNDRED FIRST CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER KAZIMIERA PRUNSKIENE OF LITHUANIA

MAY 3, 1990

Printed for the use of the
Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe

[CSCE 101-2-16]

J891-8

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

30-638 cc WASHINGTON : 1990

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, Congressional Sales Office
U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402

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CONTENTS

WITNESS

	Page
Prunskiene, Kazimiera, Prime Minister of Lithuania	11

STATEMENTS

DeConcini, Hon., Chairman, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe	1
Hoyer, Hon. Steny H., Co-chairman, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe	2
D'Amato, Hon. Alfonse, a U.S. Senator From the State of New York	3
Ritter, Hon. Don, a Representative in Congress From the State of Pennsylvania	3
Lautenberg, Hon. Frank, a U.S. Senator From the State of New Jersey	4
Markey, Hon. Edward J., a Representative in Congress From the State of Massachusetts	5
McClure, Hon. James, a U.S. Senator From the State of Idaho	6
Porter, Hon. John Edward, a Representative in Congress From the State of Illinois	7
Wirth, Hon. Timothy, a U.S. Senator From the State of Colorado	7
Wolf, Hon. Frank R., a Representative in Congress From the State of Virginia	8
Wallop, Hon. Malcolm, a U.S. Senator From the State of Wyoming	8
Fowler, Hon. Wyche, a Representative in Congress From the State of Georgia	8
Reid, Hon. Harry, a U.S. Senator From the State of Nevada	8
Fritts, William D., Jr., Assistant Secretary of Commerce	9
Fascell, Hon. Dante B., a Representative in Congress From the State of Florida	10
Heinz, Hon. John, a U.S. Senator From the State of Pennsylvania	15

PUBLIC HEARING ON MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER KAZIMIERA PRUNSKIENE OF LITHUANIA

THURSDAY, MAY 3, 1990

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE
Washington, DC

The Commission met, pursuant to notice, in room 216, Hart Senate Office Building, at 10:30 a.m., Senator Dennis DeConcini, Chairman, and Representative Steny H. Hoyer, Cochairman, presiding.

In attendance; Commissioners, Senators Alfonse D'Amato, Frank Lautenberg, James McClure, Timothy Wirth, Malcolm Wallop, Wyche Fowler, Harry Reid, John Heinz; Representatives Don Ritter, Edward J. Markey, John Edward Porter, Frank R. Wolf and from the Department of Commerce William D. Fritts, Jr.

OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN DeCONCINI

Chairman DECONCINI: The Helsinki Commission will come to order.

It is my great honor and that of the members of the Commission to welcome Prime Minister Prunskiene of Lithuania this morning.

Prime Minister Prunskiene, an accomplished economist has been a vocal and influential leader in Lithuania's pro independence movement. Following her election to the Lithuanian parliament, she was elected Prime Minister on March 17 of this year.

My remarks this morning will be brief, and I urge my colleagues to limit theirs, if they can, so that we can give the Prime Minister the maximum amount of time to respond and possibly to present testimony and we have some time for questions.

For years now we have watched the process of glasnost and perestroika and have encouraged Soviet President Gorbachev's extraordinary political boldness in fostering historic opportunities for fundamental changes in the world.

It was the very process unleashed by President Gorbachev which led to the formation of the first democratically elected parliament in Lithuania in more than 50 years. The parliament, the Lithuanian supreme council, fulfilled the mandate of the people of Lithuania on March 11, when it declared the restoration of Lithuanian's independent statehood.

Lithuanian's independence guaranteed in the 1920 peace treaty with Moscow was violated when Soviet troops occupied Lithuania and the other Baltic States in 1940. It's proud to note that the United States and other Western Governments have never, never

recognized Lithuania, Estonia or Latvia as part of the Soviet Union.

The self-determination of the Lithuanian people and the de jure independence of that state must be regarded as a starting point in the process of reestablishing Lithuanian independence de facto.

Many of us have repeatedly urged the Soviet Government to respond to Lithuanians' appeal and enter into a process of constructive dialogue, for it is only through such a process that a peaceful and equitable resolution will be reached.

It is with great pleasure that we welcome you here, Prime Minister Prunskiene. We are very optimistic about your leadership and that of your country, and before we hear from you, I will yield to the Co-Chairman of the Helsinki Commission, Congressman Hoyer.

OPENING STATEMENT OF CO-CHAIRMAN HOYER

Co-Chairman HOYER. Madame Prime Minister, I am pleased to join the Chairman in welcoming you as our distinguished guest before this Commission.

In signing the 1975 Helsinki Final Act, the Soviet Union, United States and 33 other countries pledged to respect the rights of peoples to self-determination and to determine their internal and external political status.

Madame Prime Minister, as you so well know, it is easier to sign onto these words than to insure their realization, but I remain hopeful that an equitable resolution to the differences between Moscow and Lithuania can and will be found.

This resolution must respect Lithuanian rights. We in the Congress of the United States have been searching for the best approach to U.S. policy towards Lithuania. On Tuesday, Madame Prime Minister, as you probably know, the Senate passed a resolution on withholding U.S. trade benefits from the Soviet Union until the economic embargo against the Lithuanian people is lifted.

The Congress has also passed several resolutions of support for you and your people.

Since its inception in 1976, the Helsinki Commission has supported the Baltic peoples' right to self-determination. We sent election observers to the parliamentary elections in Lithuanian, Latvia and Estonia, and have produced major reports on the rise of independence movements in the Baltic States.

The Commission, Madame Prime Minister, also plans to raise this issue at the upcoming CSCE human rights meeting in Copenhagen.

Madame Prime Minister, one of the joys of serving on the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe is that from time to time we have individuals of great courage and great commitment appear before us to give testimony to the ongoing quest of peoples, led by individuals, for freedom, for justice, and for the values that are set forth in the Helsinki Final Act.

We welcome you, and we look forward to your testimony.

Chairman DECONCINI. Thank you, Congressman Hoyer.

[Applause.]

Chairman DECONCINI. The chair is going to yield to members for opening statements and ask that they be brief. I am just going to

go down the line here based on seniority alternating, and if I make a mistake, please correct me.

The next is the ranking Republican member on the Senate side of the Helsinki Commission. That is Senator D'Amato of New York.

Senator D'Amato.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR ALFONSE D'AMATO OF NEW YORK

Senator D'AMATO. Mr. Chairman, I wanted to commend you and our distinguished Co-Chairman for scheduling this important hearing, and I am going to take the admonition of the chair and keep my remarks very brief.

I want to welcome the Prime Minister here and extent to her heartfelt support. I believe she can feel it as she came into the hearings today.

Freedom is not a convenience, and if the Lithuanian people are standing up for it and enduring all of the problems encountered with the aggressive economic tactics of the Soviets, then the least we can do is to tell the Soviets quite clearly that if they continue to oppress those who seek liberty and freedom, that the United States will not make available to them the economic concessions and trade and technological assistance that they seek.

If we fail to at least be clear in making this message known to the Soviets, we have betrayed not only the cause of freedom and the Lithuanian people, but our basic principles upon which this country has been founded and our own heritage.

And I believe that in the fullness of time that our response will be heard very clearly by the Soviets.

I thank you.

Chairman DECONCINI. I will now yield to Congressman Ritter, the ranking member on the House side.

STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE DON RITTER OF PENNSYLVANIA

Representative RITTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to commend you and the Co-Chairman for holding this extremely important and timely hearing.

Sveikinu atvykus i Amerikos Kongresa.

[Applause.]

Representative RITTER. And we are very proud to welcome your arrival to the American Congress.

We understand that the situation in Lithuanian is growing more desperate daily. We hope that we in this Commission, this bipartisan Commission with a nearly 15-year tradition for support of Lithuanian self-determination and freedom, can be of assistance to you, your country, the people of Lithuania in bringing about an appropriate self-determination solution for your struggle.

We consider your struggle a struggle of restoration. That is the key word, to restore the independence and self-determination of Lithuanian.

As co-chairman of the House Ad Hoc Committee on the Baltic States and Ukraine and a member of this Commission for a decade,

it is an extreme personal pleasure to have you with us today here in America before a crucial forum of the U.S. Congress.

I want to take this moment to commend the Lithuanian people for their tremendous courage in the face of overwhelming odds.

As I said, the Commission has been a forum for Lithuanian self-determination and freedom since its inception, and the cause of greater global freedom is not served by the sacrifice of the freedom of the Lithuanian people. Indeed, the cause of greater global freedom and freedom and self-determination inside the Soviet Union is served by Lithuanian self-determination and freedom.

And in closing, I would like to say that I believe very strongly that the strength of President Gorbachev is heightened by the freedom and self-determination of the Lithuanian people; that as a reformer, his stature is enhanced as the cause of freedom and self-determination is enhanced. That is a fact, and that perhaps is something we need to get straight along the length and breadth of our own Government.

Thank you, and once again, welcome.

[Applause.]

Chairman DECONCINI. Thank you, Congressman.

I will now yield to Senator Lautenberg.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR FRANK LAUTENBERG OF NEW JERSEY

Senator LAUTENBERG. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

And welcome, Madame Prime Minister. We are grateful to have you here before us. I come from the State of New Jersey where we have many Lithuanian Americans very much concerned about what is taking place, and I want to make it clear to the Prime Minister that I strongly support the aspirations of the Lithuanian people to independence and self-determination.

I have repeatedly urged Secretary of State Baker and others in the administration to do everything they can to find ways to support that cause.

Yesterday in the Senate, we passed a resolution that asks that the recently signed trade agreement not be submitted to the Senate for approval until the Soviet Union lifts its economic embargo against your country and enters into negotiations.

I strongly backed that resolution because it is time the Congress found a way to express the support that many of us feel for the Lithuanian struggle, and I hope that that sends a strong message to the Soviet Union that the fruits of the relationship that they seek with the United States cannot be harvested while they refuse to deal in good faith with the peaceful aspirations of the Lithuanian people.

And I would ask that you carry the message back to your people that we in the West are not going to abandon you. We are going to stick with you. We all want to see your country independent and free. Perhaps we have a difference on the best way to achieve that goal, but there is no difference on the goal that you seek for your people and your country.

And I look forward to hearing from you today, and once again, welcome to this land of freedom.

[Applause.]

Chairman DECONCINI. I yield now to Congressman Markey of Massachusetts.

STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE EDWARD J. MARKEY OF MASSACHUSETTS

Representative MARKEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I thank you, Steny, for calling this hearing, and I want to join in welcoming Prime Minister Prunskiene to America and to this hearing.

This is a highly emotional, highly risky moment in the history of Lithuania, and it ill-behooves us to preach to you on the subject of independence. In 1976, our nation declared its independence from Great Britain, but we had to fight and win a Revolutionary War in order to turn that Declaration of Independence into a reality.

Lithuania obviously does not have the option of winning its independence by force of arms. Only a political compromise and dialogue between the Lithuanians and the Soviet Government can achieve that goal.

But, by the same token, it ill-behooves Lithuania to unilaterally declare its immediate independence from the Soviet Union and then to charge the West with "appeasement" and "another Munich" when it fails to embrace Lithuania's unilateral strategy.

While America has never formally recognized Soviet sovereignty over the Baltic States, we never insisted that Stalin, Khrushchev or Brezhnev set Lithuania free when they were in power. Should we now punish Gorbachev for failing to do so on the terms Lithuania prefers, when we know that it is Gorbachev's reforms that make the independence movement possible in the first place?

Because of Gorbachev, 1,800 Soviet tactical nuclear weapons once targeted against Western Europe have been reduced to scrap metal. In the next few years, we will witness the dismantlement of 4,000 Soviet strategic nuclear weapons aimed against American cities, the elimination of Soviet arsenals of chemical weapons, and massive withdrawals of Soviet troops and tanks from central Europe.

We have seen 71,000 Jews able to leave the Soviet Union last year and three to 4,000 now leaving every month. We have seen the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the emergence of democracy in Eastern Europe. We have seen political pluralism and reform come to the Soviet Union.

All of these developments benefit America's national interest and ultimately, Lithuania's best interests as well. To retaliate against the Soviet Union because of Lithuania right now would be to establish an inverse system of punishments and rewards in which reformist regimes are sanctioned for the consequences of actions their Stalinist predecessors undertook without paying any serious penalty.

I believe that the Bush administration is correct in rejecting such an approach, and in rejecting calls for trade sanctions or a delay in the summit.

In the 1960's the People's Republic of China annexed the nation of Tibet. The Tibetan people's case for independence from China is no less compelling than Lithuania's case for independence from the Soviet Union.

And yet today we export high tech products to China that we cannot legally export to Poland, Czechoslovakia or the Soviet Union. If Li Peng or Deng were to be replaced by a Chinese Gorbachev and the Tibetans began to actively press for independence, would it serve any useful purpose for us to suspend trade and economic ties with the new reformist Chinese leadership? I do not believe that it would.

Gorbachev says Lithuania can secede from the Soviet Union if you rescind your independence declaration and follow the procedures set up for secession under Soviet law.

Mr. Landsbergis says that Lithuania will not rescind its independence declaration as a matter of principle and that the legal procedures for secession are too cumbersome for Lithuania to follow.

Right now this is a dialogue of the deaf. The Lithuanians and the Soviets are talking past each other when you should be talking with each other. What is needed is a more conciliatory approach on both sides.

I am pleased to see that Lithuania is willing to suspend some of the independence laws that led to the current Soviet economic embargo. I would hope that the Soviets would make a similar conciliatory step by dropping its demand that you rescind your independence declaration.

America has a commitment to the principle of national self-determination, and we also have a determination. On the other hand, Americans also want to see Gorbachev succeed in his program of reforms.

We want to reduce the threat of war with arms control agreements, and we want better trade and economic ties with the East, and we want Soviet Jews to continue to be able to emigrate to Israel and to the United States.

We are confronted with a situation here where there are competing interests at stake, and the best solution for us to adopt is the one which the Bush administration has wisely pursued, and it is one which I believe will ultimately result in the continuation of the Gorbachev regime and ultimately the independence of Lithuania.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman DECONCINI. Thank you, Congressman.

I want to now yield to Senator McClure and just remind everyone that if we can keep our statements short, we will put them in the record so that we can hear from the Prime Minister.

Senator McClure.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR JAMES McCLURE OF IDAHO

Senator MCCLURE. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I am not going to respond to Congressman Markey, although I certainly disagree.

[Applause.]

Chairman DECONCINI. Excuse me, Senator McClure.

May I please ask the audience not to participate in the hearings with expressions of support or nonsupport? These hearings are for the purpose of the Commission to hear from the Prime Minister

and to execute our duties of views on issues, and we would respectfully ask that you not do that, please.

Senator McClure.

Senator McCLURE. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

This is not the time for us to debate the differences among ourselves, but I do wish to express my profound admiration for the Lithuanian people in their struggle to regain the independence that was by force denied them nearly 50 years ago.

The United States has, for nearly 50 years, quite correctly condemned that action as illegal. That is still the position, I believe, of the overwhelming majority of the American public.

We do not wish to determine the independence of a territory of the Soviet Union, but rather to restore the independence of an occupied land. How we may help you to do this is very much on our hearts and our minds.

We recognize the fact that Soviet military authority has been exercised over your territory for nearly half a century. We are still committed to the same U.S. position that we have had for all of these years, that the occupation was illegal and is illegal.

We should and I hope we will also support the voices inside the Soviet Union which recognize that illegality as they review the actions of their country over the last 70 years. I think such voices of reason will be heard, and I hope they will prevail.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman DECONCINI. Thank you very much.

I now will recognize the Congressman from Illinois, Mr. Porter.

STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE JOHN EDWARD PORTER OF ILLINOIS

Representative PORTER. Madame Prime Minister, I will be very brief, as my Chairman has requested.

I think the United States must stand forth for the values that we believe in and have constantly expressed since 1939. I believe we should immediately recognize Lithuania as an independent nation, and I believe that we should deny to the Soviet Union most-favored-nation status in any trade agreement until the independence of Lithuania and all of the Baltic States is guaranteed.

Madame Prime Minister, I welcome you, as do my colleagues, and look forward to your message.

Chairman DECONCINI. Thank you.

I will now recognize Senator Wirth.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR TIMOTHY WIRTH OF COLORADO

Senator WIRTH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. Prunskiene, thank you very much for being here. We are delighted to have you. As you know, the American people are viewing the situation with great concern and your arrival with enormous affection. We look forward to hearing from you today of your formulation as to how we best sort our way through the conundrum we face.

The Lithuanian people and the American people are united in their concerns about the independence of Lithuania and arriving at

that, and Mr. Gorbachev has said that eventually he wants to reach that goal, as well.

What we are here for today is to try to better understand how to get from here to there, and we look forward to hearing your thoughts and perspectives.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman DECONCINI. Thank you.

Now, I will recognize Congressman Wolf.

STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE FRANK R. WOLF OF VIRGINIA

Representative WOLF. I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank the Chairman and Mr. Hoyer for holding these hearings, and, Madame Prime Minister, I want to welcome you and wish you and your people well.

I come from the State of Virginia, the State from which Thomas Jefferson came. In the Declaration of Independence he helped write about the God-given rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. These words were not only written for the American people. They were written for people of Lithuania and, frankly, people all over this world. Again, I just want to welcome you today.

Chairman DECONCINI. Senator Malcolm Wallop of Wyoming.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR MALCOLM WALLOP OF WYOMING

Senator WALLOP. Madame Prime Minister, I am among those very proud to welcome you here, and I do not believe that there should be any shame on the part of Lithuania with the declaration that their state of occupation must end.

The people of Eastern Europe likewise must not sacrifice your independence on their new state of freedom. Your independence is our independence, and none of us is wholly free while some of us are not free.

Thank you.

Chairman DECONCINI. The Senator from Georgia, Mr. Fowler.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR WYCHE FOWLER OF GEORGIA

Senator FOWLER. Madame Prime Minister, you have been extraordinarily patient in listening to the differences expressed, by this Commission, but what you hear are the differences allowed by freedom, freedom of expression, freedom of thought, a freedom that your country and countrymen will soon enjoy.

The differences you hear from us are differences on means and not ends, the means of achieving Lithuanian independence. Lithuania will be free, and your friends in Bonn, Paris, Washington and freedom loving people all over the world are only attempting to find the best way to help you achieve those aspirations.

We will succeed. Then we will celebrate your independence together.

Chairman DECONCINI. The Senator from Nevada, Mr. Reid.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR HARRY REID OF NEVADA

Senator REID. Mr. Chairman, over the years many people have expressed their outrage over the 1939 Molotov-Rippentrop Pact.

Today, 50 years later, I, too, express my outrage at this pact, but also I express my concern over the new Bush-Gorbachev Pact.

I personally do not understand President Bush's course of inaction. These are times that test the strengths of our beliefs and our moral vigor. President Bush has paved the road with inaction. We all know where that road leads.

Mr. Chairman, I want to read part of a letter from a constituent of mine from Carson City, Nevada.

The letter was as follows [reads]:

Dear Senator Reid: My father fled his native Lithuania during World War II to escape the Communists and became a citizen of the United States in 1950. He has since been a proud and staunch advocate of our country, has dutifully voted in all of the elections he was eligible to participate in. He taught his children and anyone else who would listen never to take for granted this wonderful country we live in. Please do not let his adopted country let the land of his birth down.

That is the end of the letter.

Mr. Chairman, while I do not agree with everything that Congressman Markey has said, I certainly recognize, as did Senator Fowler, that that is part of the proceedings that take place in our country on an everyday basis, and the Prime Minister, I am sure, recognizes that.

Congressman Markey's statement was well reasoned, and having served with him, I know how much thought he put into that statement.

Madame Prime Minister, you and your country have performed brave deeds these past few months, and I, with most Americans, salute your daring, but it should be a reminder to all Americans, and especially to our President, of our country's own beginnings. It should be a reminder that without the help of other countries, our own would still be a colony of the British Empire.

Madame Prime Minister, I am proud to be here today in your presence.

Chairman DECONCINI. I now recognize Assistant Secretary of Commerce, Commissioner Fritts.

STATEMENT OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF COMMERCE WILLIAM D. FRITTS, JR.

Secretary FRITTS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Vice Chairman. I am grateful to your holding the hearing today, and I appreciate the opportunity to welcome the Prime Minister.

I do have a formal statement, Mr. Chairman. I ask that it be included in the record.

Chairman DECONCINI. It will be included.

I yield to Senator——

Secretary FRITTS. I just have some comments that I thought might be appropriate.

Chairman DECONCINI. Excuse me.

Secretary FRITTS. In greeting the Prime Minister today, we put to test the principles to which all Americans aspire, which have animated the life of our republic for more than 200 years.

We see in the struggle of this small country an image of our own struggle to free this nation from its subjugation by a great power two centuries ago. During that fight, we were helped by individuals

from Europe, Poles, Germans, Hungarians, Frenchmen, and by another great nation at the time, France.

Today we are face with a plea that we repay with our own commitment to freedom. The situation is more complicated than the 18th century, but the basic issue is the same: a nation wants freedom.

How we respond to that struggle will tell us a great deal about ourselves. Only the means are at issue. The goal cannot be questioned.

Madame Prime Minister, we welcome you in the certain knowledge that your country will soon join in the family of nations which enjoy and exercise the rights and responsibilities inherent in free and democratic societies, and I look forward to your comments.

Chairman DECONCINI. I thank the Commissioner, and I apologize for interrupting him.

I will yield to Congressman Hoyer to enter a statement.

Co-Chairman HOYER. Mr. Chairman, Prime Minister Prunskiene had breakfast today with a member of our Commission, the former Chairman of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Chairman of our Foreign Affairs Committee, Dante Fascell.

I would like to ask unanimous consent that his statement in welcoming the Prime Minister be included at this time in the record in total.

However, I would like to read his last paragraph.

The Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives said this:

> The world should know where we stand. And, as far as I am concerned, we support your valiant struggle for freedom and independence for Lithuania.

[The statement of Representative Dante Fascell submitted by Co-Chairman Hoyer follows:]

OPENING REMARKS OF CHAIRMAN FASCELL

BREAKFAST MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER PRUNSKIENE OF LITHUANIA

MAY 3, 1990

We are particularly pleased that you could join us this morning. I want you to know that the Foreign Affairs Committee regularly hosts dicussions of this kind with visiting leaders of independent nations.

While we recognize the difficult situation that now exists in Lithuania, as well as in Latvia and Estonia, the United States has never recognized the illegal incorporation of these small nations into the Soviet Union.

As a practical matter, Lithuania is an occupied country, whose borders are controlled by the Armed Forces of the Soviet Union. The use of those armed forces to seal the borders of your small nation makes it virtually impossible for the United States, or any other Western nation, to provide economic assistance to Lithuania. The use of force by the West in a nuclear age is out of the question.

Economic sanctions against the Soviet Union, without the full support of all Western nations, simply will not work. While such sanctions would have some symbolic effect, even that symbolism would be overtaken by the publicity and prestige attached to the planned visit of President Gorbachev to the United States for a summit meeting.

I have suggested that the President consider postponing that summit meeting if the economic strangulation of Lithuania continues to be pursued by President Gorbachev. As far as I am concerned, vital arms control negotiations should continue to be pursued in the interest of world peace. I do not believe, however, that we should

place the prestige of the United States—which has led the struggle for freedom, democracy, and human rights—at the disposal of the leader of the Soviet Union while he is trampling those important principles in Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia.

The world should know where we stand. And, as far as I am concerned, we support your valiant struggle for freedom and independence for Lithuania.

We welcome you here. We commend your courage and determination. And we look forward to hearing what you have to say.

Chairman DECONCINI. Thank you, Congressman Hoyer.

Before we turn to the Prime Minister, let me ask Mr. Sinevicius and Mr. Purtulis, members of the freely elected parliament of Lithuania if they would please stand and be recognized. And now the audience may applaud.

[Applause.]

ChairmanDECONCINI: Some day, Madame Prime Minister, I hope you will have an ambassador with you for Lithuania.

[Applause.]

Chairman DECONCINI. We will now yield to you for any comments that you might care to make, Madame Prime Minister.

STATEMENT OF PRIME MINISTER KAZIMIERA PRUNSKIENE

[Through interpreter]

Prime Minister PRUNSKIENE. Honored Chairman, esteemed Senators and Congressmen, and all other honored guests, I would like to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude to you for giving me the opportunity to address you in this forum.

I want to express the fervent desire of the Lithuanian people that with your help and with the help of the American public, Lithuania will be able to consolidate its independence.

Thank you.

For some time now, Lithuania and her Baltic neighbors have been reminding the world of the fact of their existence and, by doing so, have aroused worry as well as interest.

The restoration of an independent Lithuanian state was a legal act expressing the nation's self-determination and its right to full sovereignty. The most important preconditions for the restoration of independence were:

The first point, the Lithuanian nation's longstanding desire, shared by the other two Baltic nations, for independent statehood which given expression by its democratically elected parliament;

Second, the refusal of other states around the world to recognize the annexation of Lithuania by the Soviet Union;

Third, political changes under President Gorbachev which permitted the Soviet Union itself to declare the Hitler-Stalin Pact null and void.

The act entitled on the restoration of an independent Lithuanian state, which was passed by the Lithuanian parliament on March 11, begins to establish our state sovereignty. We have enacted a legal de juris sovereignty.

By no means does the Lithuanian parliament and Government believe that de facto independence can be grabbed unilaterally and quickly, especially when dealing with the Soviet Union with its deep-rooted, imperial traditions.

Lithuania does not want to burden President Gorbachev with her problems, complicating his situation and raising a danger to his

leadership or to Perestroika, a danger that has been dramatized around the world.

Lithuania also does not want to shift her problems onto the West. Nevertheless, these three sides, the Soviet Union, Lithuania, and the West, are drawn together through the Lithuanian issue.

How the question is solved will depend, first of all, on the people of Lithuania themselves, on their unity, determination, calm, and so long as the economic blockade lasts, on their stamina and enterprise as well. The people are showing the world that they do have those qualities.

The roles of East and West in the resolution of the Lithuanian question are complicated by a series of factors. First, the Soviet Union does not have a balanced equilibrium of political forces. Although the influence of the democratic forces is increasing, it is not yet equal to the other side. The democratic forces are only starting to consolidate and often clash among themselves.

From what I have observed, Mr. Gorbachev does not make full use of support from the democratic forces to overcome the reactionaries.

Second, the Western nations, thanks to whose nonrecognition policy Lithuania was able to preserve the legal continuity of her independence, became accustomed to her factual dependence. They valued President Gorbachev's Perestroika as a way of insuring human and national rights to the point that the process began to be valued more than the goal, the realization of these rights.

It is difficult for the West to perceive that pressuring the Soviet Union on the Lithuanian question helps rather than hinders President Gorbachev to be a consistent practitioner of democracy, more than that, to overcome the reactionary forces which oppose not only independence for the Baltic States, but also political and economic reforms in general.

The West's position now, during a period of economic difficulties for the Soviet Union, can be one of the most important arguments for a decisive return to reform.

Lithuania is undergoing a great testing. So, too, is the Soviet Union, as well as the West. What sort of Russia or Soviet Union will emerge depends in part on how the Lithuanian issue will be resolved.

This is understood by the democratic forces supporting us in the various Soviet republics and regions, such as Moscow, Leningrad, Svedlosk where the newly elected governments are sympathetic to us.

As regards the role of the West, we see and understand their desire to have in President Gorbachev a reliable political leader in East-West relations. Here our interests coincide. But for this we cannot sacrifice everything that is most important: the nation's future and its very existence.

Such a sacrifice is senseless and not useful even to the West itself because Lithuania's sacrifice would not help the Soviet Union enter a new stage of development as a nation of laws and a reliable economic partner for the West.

In other words, the Lithuanian question can and must be solved without damage to democracy in the Soviet Union. In fact, I would contend that the recognition of Lithuania's independence by East

and West would be a tremendous victory for democratization in the Soviet Union within the context of Perestroika.

You do not have to choose between Lithuania and Gorbachev. The solution is this: Gorbachev, together with a breakthrough for democracy in the Soviet Union and an independent Lithuania. These are two compatible and converging sides of the same process rather than alternatives.

I do not contend that President Gorbachev's preferred scenario for Lithuania coincides with Lithuania's own aspirations. I think that he would speak out for Lithuania remaining in federation, although not by force.

However, even the world's darling does not have the monopolistic right to decide the fate of other nations, and here we cannot help him at all. For otherwise sympathy degenerates into toadyism, and the latter gives birth to a cult.

Lithuania cannot demand support. She has neither the political, nor the economic strength to do so. She is also prevented by an understanding of an elementary truth, that every state and its leaders have their own problems and their own interests.

Our hope lies not only in other nations' moral principles, but also in the advantage which other states will sooner or later see in Lithuanian statehood and the role that she can play between East and West. This role will be the result both of her geo-political situation and of the Soviet Union's abandonment of its imperial inertia, which we are testing at great risk and will have helped to shake up if we are successful.

Even at present, when heads of state are not hurrying to put economic pressure on the Soviet Union or to help Lithuania, the world's attention is already a significant form of support. In such a situation, it is hard to imagine that the Kremlin blockading us from the East would succeed in isolating Lithuania from the West, as well, preventing us from associating with the rest of the world. This would mean economic destruction, hunger, and the use of cold as a weapon, a literal "cold war."

Until the last few days, the Western nations confined themselves to urging both sides to start negotiations. President Mitterand and Chancellor Cole's proposal for a temporary suspension of the execution of the Lithuanian parliament's decisions as a condition to spur the Kremlin to negotiation significantly changes the situation.

By this act, these heads of state became, in effect, participants or mediators in the solution of Lithuania's problems, although they did not express such an intention. To suggest a course of action means at the same time to take on a certain amount of responsibility.

Lithuania's leadership, understanding that the path of no compromise in the execution of the enacted legislation is impossible, and appreciating the importance of guarantees by other states, is disposed to consider such a formula.

But it must be stated without ambiguity or the possibility of different interpretations. We could temporarily suspend the quick and unilateral execution of the past legislation if there were international guarantees. In no way does this mean a repeal of the acts passed on March 11 or the renunciation of independence.

In such a case, Lithuania would have to be guaranteed on the basis of international law the continuity of Lithuanian independence, the continuation of her Government, and her territorial integrity.

The Government of the Republic of Lithuania has proposed more than once to the leaders of the Soviet Union that we start a dialogue in search of compromises, naming a number of possible areas, such as the reconciliation of military and defense interests, guarantees for civil rights of Soviet citizens in Lithuania, the division of wealth, and so forth.

Concrete details would become clear during negotiations.

The Soviet side did not express interest in conducting such negotiations. Compromises cannot all come just from one side or they are no longer compromises, but rather the subjugation of the weaker by the stronger.

The Soviet Union, in demanding that the Republic of Lithuania repeal the acts of March 11, at the same time recognizes their validity because the Soviet Government itself cannot legally annual them. The economic blockade also confirms the factual separation of Lithuania from the Soviet Union after which any pretensions to Lithuania as part of the Soviet Union's territory are no longer possible.

The attempt to force Lithuania to renounce her independence through economic coercion will not succeed and will only create new socio-economic and political difficulties for the Soviet Union itself.

The people's dissatisfaction with the individuals who made such decisions is growing. Meanwhile, Lithuania, although under very difficult conditions, is looking for alternative sources of needed materials, including those in the Eastern market. Only by using the Soviet army would it be possible to totally interrupt barter exchanges of goods between Lithuania and her Eastern trade partners within the Soviet Union, and the path leads from such exchanges to full market relations.

Lithuania is going through difficult times, deprived of oil, most of her gas even now, metal and other important products. A transportation and banking blockade is in effect. Enterprises are closing. Unemployment has appeared.

However, there is also some good resulting from all of this for it gives us the chance to develop speed, initiative, enterprise and market methods. We intend to hold out and survive because there is no road back.

The approaching summit meeting between the American and Soviet Presidents, the leaders of the world's largest nations, could make a decisive contribution to the solution of the Lithuanian problem. Fate is giving them the chance to lead an admirable mark in history, starting a new epoch in Europe and in relations between West and East.

We trust that they will do so not only because their nations expect this, but also because they will be guided by the internal moral code of popular democratic leaders.

I would add in closing, esteemed Congressmen and Senators, that I am certain that your activities on our behalf will lead to the solution that I have suggested in my testimony.

ChairmanDeConcini: Madame Prime Minister, thank you for a very thoughtful statement with some obvious insights that none of us or at least this Senator had not really dwelled on.

At this time I will recognize the Senator from Pennsylvania for an opening statement if he has one before we go to questions from members.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOHN HEINZ OF PENNSYLVANIA

SenatorHeinz: Mr. Chairman, I thank you for so recognizing me. I will be very brief, and I will ask unanimous consent that my full statement will appear at this point in the record.

I just want to join the members of the Helsinki Commission in welcoming the Prime Minister here. We are very lucky to have the chance to speak to her at this crucial time in Lithuania's history.

I am sure my colleagues from the Senate have mentioned the resolution that we passed indicating that any improvement in trade relations between the United States and the Soviet Union could not be possible until the economic blockade of Lithuania came to an end and until there were negotiations between the Soviet Union and Lithuania by Lithuanians' elected Government.

That is appropriate because the American people, as well as the Congress, support Baltic independence and always have and always will.

I might only say, Madame Prime Minister, that we salute the Lithuanian people, you and your President, for your courage, for your nonviolence, and for your persistence, and for that I think you have earned the respect and deserve of the attention of all the countries of the world, and that specifically includes your very large neighbor next door, the U.S.S.R.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you.

Chairman DeConcini. Thank you, Senator Heinz.

Madame Prime Minister, you talk about the pressure that is being applied to the Lithuanian state and its people, and that obviously is a key objective in the Helsinki process. The United States and many other nations, I think, can take a lot of credit for the pressure that we have applied to the Soviet Union over the years on human rights violations, on economic embargoes, military activities and many others.

It does concern me, and as I think you have spoken to, that you are disturbed, and I do not want to put words in your mouth, but, indeed, I gather that you are disturbed that President Bush and the U.S. Government has so far not been willing to continue the Helsinki pressure process.

Is that a fair observation?

Prime Minister Prunskiene. I cannot express dissatisfaction with the President of a country who has many interests to take into consideration, and I have not lost hope that President Bush will provide Lithuania with very concrete measures of support.

Chairman DeConcini. I have not lost hope either, Madame Prime Minister. Just day before yesterday, Senator D'Amato and others of us in the Defense Committee had the Secretary there, and he kind of laid it out pretty clearly. We had a big disagreement on what pressure should be applied, but your optimism is shared here.

I wish you well this afternoon when you meet with President Bush. He understands the problem, I am sure, and indeed, I acknowledge he is an authority in comparison to many of us, but I also like your statement there or your reference that because Gorbachev is a darling today does not mean that you cannot still talk to a darling in very firm statements and, in fact, apply pressure, because I believe that that is what he would respond to.

Let me ask this question, and then I will yield to other members.

Given the economic boycott and the cutoff that you are going through, and you have testified that that is the case, how long can you maintain your needs for the people's living conditions if there is not some breakthrough in the embargo with the Soviet Union?

Prime Minister PRUNSKIENE. Lithuanian people are prepared physically to accept a great deal. The question is: how long will normal life continue to exist in Lithuania/ That is the question that we need to discuss.

The Soviets are not only blockading us from the East. They are also making it impossible for us or making it very difficult for us to seek other markets in other parts of the world, and that is what is causing the abnormal situation in Lithuania.

We believe that we can exist if we are able to get access to these other markets.

Chairman DECONCINI. Do you believe that there would be a physical blockade if someone outside the Soviet Union, some other nation, attempted to deliver fuel? Would you anticipate the Soviet navy blocking such efforts?

Prime Minister PRUNSKIENE. That will depend on which country is the one which is bringing the goods and how this issue is presented to the Soviet Union. I think that it would be highly doubtful that the Soviet Union would try to block goods that were brought over to Lithuania by the United States of America.

Chairman DECONCINI. Thank you, Madame Prime Minister.

I am going to yield to the Co-Chairman.

I am going to advise the committee members here that the Prime Minister does have to leave at 12:15.

I yield to Congressman Hoyer, Co-Chairman.

Co-Chairman HOYER. Dr. Prunskiene, first of all, let me congratulate you on an excellent statement. I think both Senator DeConcini and I will insure that this statement is included in the Congressional Record on both the Senate and House side.

It clearly recognizes the balance that must be drawn, but also reminds us that in drawing balances, we must not give up our moral principles.

Dr. Prunskiene, in following up on Chairman DeConcini's question, I know that you have been having discussions with both Canadian and American businessmen. Can you tell us how fruitful those discussions have been and whether or not you have some feeling that there will be the availability of the goods that you might need in the short term and in the long term?

Prime Minister PRUNSKIENE. We are just beginning discussions on long-term, serious economic cooperation, and it is difficult to say how fruitful these discussions will be.

However, we do have hope that these results will be positive, and it is interesting that alongside these commercial talks, we are feeling expressions of support for our cause.

Co-Chairman HOYER. Madame Prime Minister, I am going to ask only one more question because there are so many of us that want to ask questions. One of the issues is, of course, the summit that is going to be with us very shortly. You referenced that summit in your statement.

Is it your belief that the summit should move ahead and that we should as strongly as possible raise the issues you addressed within the context of that summit?

Prime Minister PRUNSKIENE. I do not want to be put in the position of giving advice to the leaders of two great powers how they should resolve matters which are of interest to both of them. But I also have no doubt that the atmosphere surrounding the meeting between President Gorbachev and President Bush in the United States will depend in great part on the situation in Lithuania when the summit takes place.

Co-Chairman HOYER. Thank you, Madame Prime Minister.

Chairman DECONCINI. I yield to the Senator from New York, Mr. D'Amato.

Senator D'AMATO. Mr. Chairman, I cannot help but mention at this time that the Prime Minister's presentation and her thoughtful answers to the Committee's questions are so very incisive and instructive. Those who would jump to conclusions should take time to reflect on both her written presentation and the manner in which she has answered these questions.

I want to salute the Prime Minister for doing such an outstanding job clarifying the situation as it exists today in Lithuania and its various ramifications.

My good friend from Massachusetts asked whether we should retaliate or place sanctions against the Soviets. That is not the question. The question is whether or not the United States, as we deal with the dilemma, and it is a dilemma, sets the agenda for honest, contemplative debate, for thoughtfulness as it relates to these terribly complex issues. I think the gentleman from Massachusetts does us a favor, and he is a friend, and I think he knows that by raising this point.

I think it comes down to this: do we say to the Soviets that if they continue to oppress and use these coercive means against the Lithuanian people, can they expect us to bend or to retract or to withdraw from our existing policies and positions—policies and positions that so far have been effective in bringing about the breakthroughs that we have seen?

There should be no concessions on most-favored-nation status. There should not be technological aid and assistance which the Soviets would seek under a waiver of the law. So do we relax our present policies in the face of what we perceive to be, and I think is undoubtedly, aggressive attitudes towards Lithuania?

I do not understand how this debate has somehow been transformed into a discussion of whether we should place restrictions on the Soviets. No. The question is: do we reward them? Shouldn't we say to them, "Look. You are not going to be rewarded because I do not believe that the Congress of the United States will go along

with the enabling legislation and approval necessary to make possible most-favored-nation status?"

I think that is what the issue is that should be debated, and I would ask one question because I think it is just really so poignant. Would the Prime Minister care to comment on the observation at page 2 in the translation of your text when you say, "It is difficult for the West to perceive that pressuring the Soviet Union on the Lithuanian question helps rather than hinders Mr. Gorbachev?"

Would you expand on that?

Prime Minister PRUNSKIENE. First of all, I want to emphasize the fact that in the Soviet Union there are different political forces at work which have a very differing attitude among the two forces toward Lithuania.

President Gorbachev spends too much time balancing these two opposing forces. What he needs to do is to align himself with the democratic forces and to, therefore, strengthen his own reformist program.

By failing to align himself with the democratic forces, President Gorbachev alienates them and loses their support. So far as the conservative forces are concerned, they have other issues on which they disagree with President Gorbachev. Lithuania is not the only question that they oppose.

Leaders of democratic forces in the Soviet Union look to the situation in Lithuania and believe that the resolution of the Lithuanian question also points to the resolution of the Soviet Union future. If Lithuania is independent, then there is hope for a democratic Russia.

Senator D'AMATO. Mr. Chairman, I thank the chair, and I thank the Prime Minister for her, again, incisive presentation.

Chairman DECONCINI. I yield to the Congressman from Pennsylvania, Mr. Ritter.

Representative RITTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I, too, want to commend you, Madame Prime Minister, for a remarkable statement, a statement that I would hope all members of the House and the Senate have a chance to read, as we have had the chance to listen to you today.

By the way, I am delighted that we are in agreement. Many of us here are in agreement with you that the case for Lithuanian independence actually strengthens the hand of liberalization and democratization in the Soviet Union. The main question then becomes: is Gorbachev a democrat, with a small D, of course?

You talk about the fostering of the forces of democratization through Lithuanian independence and self-determination. Could you expound somewhat on who are those forces? Where are they, what their systemic strength is, and how will this actually help them?

Prime Minister PRUNSKIENE. If I understood correctly then, you are referring to democratic forces in Russia and the Soviet Union.

The democratic forces find support and expression in such things as the popular fronts movement, in the new political parties which are being formed, noncommunist parties, through the leadership of municipal councils, and in the Russian parliament itself, which is due to meet in mid-May, in which it is believed that more than half of the members will be supporters of the democratic process.

Even in Moscow, where the Kremlin exists and where there are some reactionary forces, even in Moscow the democratic forces have been victorious, and on the question of Lithuania and on other questions, one can say that Moscow, where these democratic forces dominate, has come into conflict with the Kremlin itself.

Representative RITTER. I have one last follow-up question. You mentioned barter relationships to somehow keep you afloat and alive as a country with the East. Could you just expand on how you are able to continue and with whom you are able to continue to trade and barter with the Soviet Union and were are these places? Who are these people?

Prime Minister PRUNSKIENE. Barter arrangements have been made for a number of reasons. One is that the ruble is quickly becoming worthless in the Soviet Union, and the second is that the Soviet central authorities through their banking system are making it difficult, if not impossible, for us to engage in some sort of currency transaction.

We have a series of strong trading partners, which include the Moscow economy, the economy in Leningrad. We have trading arrangements also with our neighboring republics, such as Ukraine and Yellow Russia, with individual cities in Ukraine with Luvov, also with the City of Tumin which has oil and is willing to sell us a certain amount of its oil in exchange for food products.

I could give you many other examples, but what we have experienced through this economic blockade is the great difference there is between having realistic and authentic trading partners and contrasting that to trade which is imposed upon us by certain individuals who are following other interests.

The economic blockade which has been imposed upon us has had a boomerang effect and is hurting parts of the Soviet Union, and these parts of the Soviet Union which are negatively affected by the blockade which Moscow has imposed upon us are now putting pressure on Moscow itself to remove the blockade.

Representative RITTER. Thank you, Madame Prime Minister. My time has expired.

I would just urge that all Lithuanian Americans and their communities insist as this blockade goes forward as Armenians and the Armenian community and their neighbors and friends assisted the Armenian people to survive the aftermath of the massive earthquake.

I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman DECONCINI. I yield now to the Senator from New Jersey, Mr. Lautenberg.

I must just say, Senator Lautenberg and the other members, we only have about 7 minutes left of the Prime Minister's time.

Senator LAUTENBERG. I understand the admonition, Mr. Chairman. I thank you for it. It is a little late issuing it, but I thank you.

Madame Prime Minister, we are so glad to have you here. Congratulations on a wonderful, thoughtful statement, but also the skillful way in which you answered the questions.

You understand very well how complicated the situation is even as you strive to have your country free and independent, and I respect very, very much your view.

A couple of days ago I am sure you are aware the Senate passed a nonbinding resolution overwhelmingly urging the President not to submit the recently announced trade agreement to the Congress until the Soviet Union has lifted its economic embargo against your country and has entered into negotiations.

Does this resolution help your cause?

Prime Minister PRUNSKIENE. I think that this resolution is a very strong argument on our behalf, and I think that it will compel the Soviet Union to come to a decision on negotiating with Lithuania if the Soviet Union is convinced that you will follow through on your refusal to confirm the U.S.-Soviet trade agreement.

Senator LAUTENBERG. Then let me follow with this. The main reason for caution on the part of the administration is that perhaps Mr. Gorbachev and Perestroika will fall.

Do you see any danger of that?

Prime Minister PRUNSKIENE. I think I have a fairly good understanding not only of the situation in Lithuania, but the situation in the Soviet Union because last March I was elected to the Congress of People's Deputies in the Soviet Union, and I see no real danger that President Gorbachev will be overthrown.

I believe that a successful and peaceful resolution to the Lithuanian question will be a victory for democracy, and I think that the freedom of the world right now throughout the world is tied to the question of Lithuania.

Senator LAUTENBERG. One last question, Mr. Chairman.

The other day the Secretary of State told me and others sitting here in a hearing that the United States would rather provide support to help you withstand the Soviet blockade than to impose sanctions on the Soviet Union.

Which of these two courses do you think would be most helpful to Lithuania?

Prime Minister PRUNSKIENE. Political solutions are the real answer in the long run. Economic assistance to the Lithuanian people would simply be a short-term solution. I would not be in favor of long-term economic sanctions, those kinds of sanctions which would punish people, which would make people suffer.

Chairman DECONCINI. Thank you, Madame Prime Minister.

I am going to yield for just the last of the time that we have, which is only a couple of minutes to the Congressman from Massachusetts, Mr. Markey.

Representative MARKEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I would like to begin by reiterating how much we all support the goals of Lithuania in seeking to achieve independence. There is no disagreement on this panel with regard to that ultimate goal.

What we are faced with here, as you are debating in your own country, is how we construct an equation that properly factors in the legitimate independence aspirations of the people of Lithuania with fears being generated in other parts of the Soviet Union that could potentially undermine the Gorbachev regime being succeeded by a hard liner, and that is really what this debate is about.

We want to make sure that your objectives are, in fact, ultimately realized.

Let me just ask: what if you cannot get the cooperation you are looking for from the international community in terms of guarantees that you mentioned earlier?

If you cannot get the international guarantees that you mentioned earlier, will you still be willing to suspend execution of your independence laws?

Prime Minister PRUNSKIENE. First of all, I would like to address the question of fear which you mentioned. I think that fearfulness on the part of the West does nothing but strengthen the reactionary forces in the Soviet Union. It gives them more influence than they would otherwise.

As far as the question of international assurances, whether or not we receive international assurances of support for the negotiations which we have been calling for, we will continue to press the Soviet Union for negotiations. We are prepared to enter into compromises, but we will not revoke our declaration of independence.

Representative MARKEY. Let me just interject the fears that I spoke of were not the fears of the West. We are not afraid of the Soviet Union. It is fear of those who have been in power inside the Soviet Union, who do not want to see the disintegration of Soviet rule and as a result might have some stake in the removal of Gorbachev.

Prime Minister PRUNSKIENE. Yes, I was referring to the fear expressed by people in the West that by supporting Gorbachev they are going to pose a threat or by supporting Lithuania they would pose a threat to Gorbachev.

It would be a great source of support to President Gorbachev, I believe, if he could base his actions on encouragements from the West that he enter into negotiations from Lithuania.

Chairman DECONCINI. Madame Prime Minister, thank you. We are going to conclude the hearings because of your schedule. We thank you for the time.

I do want to thank Mr. Victor Nakas of the Lithuanian Information Center for the very fine job he has done.

Let me just end this hearing by making an observation, if I can. There is a couple in the room that we just met when we started these hearings. They are both Lithuanians. They were separated for over 40 years until Mr. Gorbachev came along and finally changed the laws in the country and permitted people to be reunited and let her husband join her for their 50th wedding anniversary.

Mr. Gorbachev did what was right then, and now we urge him to do what is right for all of the Lithuanian people and grant them the rightful independence that they seek.

The hearing is recessed. Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 12:20 p.m., the Commission was adjourned.]

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